

## AP Literature Summer Reading 2009-2010

You have enrolled in AP Literature and Composition. This tells me that you have a talent for writing and an aptitude for the study of literature. But more importantly, it suggests to me that you share my love for literature—for unearthing the mysteries of a work, for unraveling the layers within characters, for contemplating the reasons authors write and the motivations for the way in which they write. **Both the talent and the interest** are necessary for the student who will succeed in the AP curriculum.

Your summer reading includes a collection of stories from the Bible and mythology, as well as John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. I have provided you copies of the works from mythology. You may choose to purchase a copy of *The New American Bible* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. Both works are available online at [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com) for reasonable prices. Otherwise, you may borrow from the public library. If your family already owns a bible, you should find the selections in it. If you buy copies, write in the margins. Be active with your reading. In the end, be ready to write about and to discuss in depth what you have read.

If you have questions, I will check my school email from time to time over the summer. In the event you need to contact me with ideas and/or questions, email [jmccarthy@palmerschools.org](mailto:jmccarthy@palmerschools.org).

### Biblical and Mythological Stories

Early in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter we will study works from various literary time periods, beginning with the Classics and advancing through Postmodernism. However, the works of many of these authors refer back to some of the world's oldest literary tales, captured in the earliest myths, legends and biblical stories. Understanding the ideas behind these stories and the commonalities among these stories will provide us a solid base on which to begin our AP preparation.

Faith is individual and important, but not the purpose of our reading; our study and discussions of these works as literature should not supplant any personal beliefs you hold. Rather, you should consider the stories of mythology and the bible as literature. The following quotes provide a few different perspectives:

- “[Myths] are something intangible, perhaps not literally real, that is nevertheless true in some higher sense.” David Adams Leeming
- “[Myths] are the eternal story of humanity’s quest for self-fulfillment in the face of entropy.” Joseph Campbell

### *The Grapes of Wrath* (John Steinbeck)

A physical migration from the Oklahoma Dust Bowl to California, Promised Land of the American Dream, Steinbeck's novel is also an internal exploration of the underlying truths of justice and equality in America. Consider this novel as both an extension of the biblical stories of the Garden of Eden and/or Moses' Promised Land, as well as a mythological “quest for self-fulfillment in the face of entropy.”

The selections below include some of the most frequently alluded to figures and situations in literature. Subtle references/allusions to these works arise on the AP Lit test, in other novels, short stories, poems we will read this year or that you will read in college, and in popular movies, TV shows, video games and songs. (Easy test: How many allusions from the works below can be found in the lyrics to Coldplay's "Viva La Vida"?)

## Biblical Selections

*The New American Bible* (or equivalent version-It just needs to include Genesis, Exodus, and the New Testament.)

### Genesis

Chapters 1,2,3  
Chapter 4  
Chapter 11  
Chapter 12  
Chapter 19  
  
Chapter 22

Garden of Eden  
Cain and Abel  
The Tower of Babel  
Abram, the Promised Land  
Sodom and Gomorrah  
Lot and Lot's Wife  
Abraham and Isaac

### Exodus

Chapter 2, 3  
Chapter 6

Moses and the Burning Bush  
Daniel and the Lion's Den

### 1 Samuel (There are 2 books.)

Chapter 17

David and Goliath

### John

Chapter 11

The Raising of Lazarus

## Mythological Selections

(in *Man the Myth-Maker*) I have arranged the myths, not in chronological order but in the order I think will make the most logical sense.

Prometheus 32-36  
Pandora and Epimetheus 74-77  
Demeter and Persephone 234-239

Dionysus 49-52  
Midas 186-190

Judgment of Paris photocopy  
Daedalus and Icarus photocopy  
Labors of Hercules photocopy